

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4-8 and 10-12 remain in the application. Claims 3 and 9 have been canceled. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 3. Claim 4 has been amended to depend from claim 1. Claim 7 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of canceled claim 9. Claim 10 has been amended to depend from claim 7. All of the remaining claims also have been amended to eliminate the numeric references. Numeric references are not required under U.S. patent law and are given no patentable weight. Hence, the elimination of numeric references is not a narrowing amendment and is not an amended entered for purposes of patentability.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7-11 were rejected in view of references cited by the Examiner. However, the Examiner allowed claims 6 and 12 as filed and merely objected to claim 3 as depending from a rejected based claim. The Examiner indicated that claim 3 would be allowed if amended or rewritten into independent form with all of the limitations of the base claim.

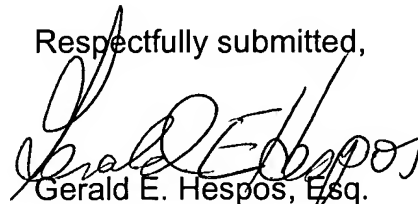
Allowed claims 6 and 12 remain in the application and have not been amended beyond the elimination the numeric references.

Allowable claim 3 had depended from claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 3. Hence, amended claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 2, 4 and 5 depend from claim 1 and hence should be allowed as well.

Claim 7 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 9. However, those additional limitations have been revised slightly to substantially follow the language that was used in allowable claim 3. These limitations also are presented in the statement of the reason for allowance. Accordingly, based on the comments in the statement for the reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter, it is believed that amended claim 7 should be allowed. Claims 8, 10 and 11 depend from claim 7 and hence should be allowed as well.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the claims remaining in the application are directed to patentable subject matter and allowance is solicited. The Examiner is urged to contact applicant's attorney at the number below to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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